



Embassy of the United States of America Bujumbura, Burundi

June 14, 2013

PRESS RELEASE

The 22nd Battalion of Burundian National Defense Forces composed of 850 soldiers will officially complete eight weeks of intensive training on June 14, 2013, in preparation for their future deployment to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The troops are part of the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program sponsored by the U.S. Embassy.

“The Burundian soldiers display exceptional fortitude and patriotism in serving Burundi in Regional Peacekeeping operations,” said U.S. Ambassador Dawn Liberi. “These operations collectively increase East African security while enabling the Federal Republic of Somalia the opportunity for increased security in order to create local, regional, and federal institutions while adhering to and implementing the rule of law. To the soldiers of the 22nd Battalion we sincerely thank you for your service, await your safe return, and wish you the best of luck in your upcoming mission.”

Ambassador Liberi also expressed its appreciation to the American, Dutch, and Burundian instructors who expertly train the Burundians for the mission in Somalia.

“The intergovernmental approach to peacekeeping training and the national support from both Burundi and the Netherlands is instrumental in achieving unity of effort for enhanced operational capability,” the ambassador said. “We look forward to this holistic effort growing stronger through future collaboration.”